



INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR REFERENCE GUIDE

The Woodlands Township
Parks & Recreation Department

Table of Contents

2 About The Woodlands Township

- The Woodlands Township Overview
- The Woodlands Township EEO Policy
- The Woodlands Township Parks and Recreation
- Why choose The Woodlands Township?
- What facilities, marketing and participant payment options can The Woodlands Township offer a contracted instructor

3 How to Submit a Proposal

- The Woodlands Township Recreation Center Mailing Address
- The Woodlands Township Activity Session Timeline

5 Frequently Asked Questions

- What are the expectations of an Independent Contractor?
- Does The Woodlands Township provide insurance for Independent Contractors?
- How do refunds and transfers work?
- Does The Woodlands Township offer participant discounts?
- Are there any additional fees for non-residents?
- Is The Woodlands Township ADA compliant?
- How does The Woodlands Township handle Independent Contractor percentages?
- How are classes priced?
- Can Independent Contractors change a facility set up?
- How does The Woodlands Township handle harassment in the workplace?
- What holidays does The Woodlands Township observe?

7 Post Approval

- Receiving your Agreement for Services
- Checking your course enrollment
- How to obtain attendance sheets
- Taking Attendance
- Cancellation of classes
- Classroom set up & clean up
- No shows
- Customer Service Standards
- Reporting and Handling Accidents and Incidents
- Receiving Payment
- Class Surveys and Monitoring
- Termination of Agreement

12 Program Promotion

- Typical Promotion by The Woodlands Township & Independent Contractor Acknowledgement

About Us

The Woodlands Township Overview

Created in 1974, The Woodlands Township is a 28,000-acre residential and commercial development located about 30 miles north of Houston, Texas. The Township is home to over 120,000 residents and 2,000+ businesses. Additionally, located within the Township are 200 miles of hiking and bike paths, 140 unique parks, and millions of square feet of shopping, dining, entertainment venues, and commercial office space. The Township features many great schools, religious institutions, medical facilities, and the world-renowned Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion. Because of the culmination of these different aspects, the Township has become known as America's #1 master-planned community.

The Woodlands Township EEO Policy

All Independent Contractors shall adhere to the Township's equal employment opportunities (EEO) policy and federal law; Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities (EEO) and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment, to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. The Township expects all interactions [in the Township] will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.

The Woodlands Township Parks and Recreation

Within the Township is the Parks and Recreation Department. This department operates and maintains paths, parks, fields, courts, ponds, pavilions, etc. In addition to this, the Parks and Recreation Department also provides a wide variety of programs, camps, lessons, activities for both residents and non-residents. These can range from summer camps to tai chi lessons or fencing and Spanish language courses. There's always something available for everyone! The Township Parks and Recreation Department has won many awards and has been recognized by the National Recreation and Parks Association and the Texas Recreation and Parks Society.

Department Purpose

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Department is to maintain, contribute to and enhance the quality of life in The Woodlands Township. This purpose is achieved through the provision and facilitation of recreational programs for residents of all ages with a special emphasis on teen and youth programming, the protection and restoration of our native and forested environment, and stewardship of common areas of associations including parks, swimming pools, facilities, pathways, athletic fields, roadsides, and medians.



Vision Statement

The Woodlands Township, our dynamic hometown within a natural forest, is known for its balance between man and nature. We are a thriving business community and a premier destination for visitors – a place where generations live, work, learn and play.

How to Submit a Proposal

Interested parties can fill out the electronic program proposal form located on The Woodlands Township website. Once completed, the application will be forwarded to the appropriate program contact for review and follow up. If you have specific questions, feel free to call The Recreation Center at Bear Branch Park (281-210-3950) or The Recreation Center at Rob Fleming Park (281-516-7348) or email recreation@thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov.

When completing the program proposal forms, please keep a few things in mind:



1. Questions to Ask:

- Who is the audience for the program?
- What time and location would fit best for the intended audience?
- Have you seen a demand for this program? Is the community currently meeting demands?
- How will the participant benefit? Include this information in your description.
- Is the course description interesting? Is the title catchy?
- Does the price of the program match the services provided? Have you compared with local area service providers to gauge?

2. **Be specific on requests made in the proposal.** If anything is left blank, the proposal cannot be processed.

- Please review the revenue splits to help determine price. The Independent Contractor will be paid out on the total enrollment fees collected minus the differential fee charged to non- residents.
- Indoor Programs: (Recreation Center) 60/40 split
- Outdoor Programs: 70/30 split
- Tennis Programs: varied percentages ranging from 70/30 to 90/10 based on type of lesson (private, semi-private, group, tournaments, etc.)
- Approved Fitness Provider – monthly rate to host classes on Township property.
See Township Order 020-09, as amended.

3. **The Township will not accept proposals for classes where demand is not recognized, or programming has been proven unsuccessful.** Special consideration will be given to those who can provide detailed evidence that there are an appropriate number of interested participants

4. **Submitting a proposal to the Township does not guarantee that the class or activity will be added to the list of offered programs.** There is no guarantee that approved programs will be automatically continued from session to session.

- 5. The Township will postpone the start dates of any new programs to coincide with the publication of the next Action Guide edition.**

Activity Guide Edition	Date Range Course Are Held	Application Due Date
Spring	January to May	September 1st
Summer	June to August	February 1st
Fall/Winter	September to December	May 1st

- 6. Proposals will be evaluated by a screening committee comprised of Township employees.** The Township, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to disqualify proposals that it finds unacceptable. Points and other such evaluation methods are used to aid in the evaluation process but are not always definitive. The Township will only accept proposals that are in the best interest of the Township.

Criteria for Evaluation

Possible Points

a.) Independent Contractor Experience	20
b.) Competitors – Facility or neighboring agencies	10
c.) Capacity – Registration capacity for the class	20
d.) Demand – Demand for the particular type of class	25
e.) Focus – Class fits into the focus areas of the Township	25



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are the expectations of an Independent Contractor?

A. Before any classes/instruction can begin, all Independent Contractors are required to complete necessary W-9 paperwork and sign an Independent Contractor Agreement ("Agreement."). The Township holds Independent Contractors to high standards. The Independent Contractor is expected to enforce a drug free environment and follow all background check requirements, as stated in the Agreement. Independent Contractors are required to provide the Township with a picture, short biography and contact information to be listed with each program. Independent Contractors must wear appropriate attire, consistent with the program and meeting community standards. Independent Contractors must adhere to the Township Park Rules, Order 019-09, as amended. Independent Contractors must meet the Program and Participant Ratio Guidelines, as outlined in the Agreement.

Q: What are the Program and Participant Ratio Guidelines?

A. In accordance with the Agreement, Instructor to participant ratios are crucial to the success of any program. The consideration of actual activities performed, as well as the ages of participants, will affect this ratio. Independent Contractor must provide a safe program setting by providing appropriate supervision and instruction. The Township reserves the right to require additional supervision or program modification based on a mutually agreed upon state or national standard (American Camping Association, United States Tennis Association, Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation) to be provided by the Independent Contractor at the sole expense of the Independent Contractor based upon the program activities and ages of participants.

Q: How do participant refunds and transfers work?

- A.
- In accordance with the Agreement, Participant refunds will be provided as follows:
 - Full refunds will be given to participants who have registered for a class or program that has been cancelled by The Woodlands Township.
 - If the participant requests a refund more than three (3) days prior to the start of any class or program, one day class or program or recurring class, they will receive a full refund, less a \$5.00 service charge.
 - If the participant attends the first (1st) day of class and, for any reason is not satisfied, they will receive a full refund, less the \$5.00 processing fee.
 - Participants must submit a refund request prior to the second (2nd) class meeting. After the second day of class, NO refunds will be available unless approved by the independent contractor.
 - Fees associated with online transactions are non-refundable.
 - No cash refunds are given. A refund check may take up to three to four weeks to process and receive.

Q: Does the Township offer participant discounts?

A. The Township does not offer discounts in relation to contracted programs. Independent Contractors determine the program's basic fees. At their discretion, Independent Contractors can include sibling or other discounts and decide whether to allow participants to register for a partial session at a pro-rated cost.

Q: Are there any additional fees for non-residents?

- A. The Township charges a resident and non-resident fee for all courses. Independent Contractor will be paid out the total enrollment fees collected minus the differential fee charged to non-residents.



Q: Is The Woodlands Township ADA compliant?

- A. Yes. The Township fully complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Township strives to be inclusive in all activities/programs and is willing to make reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. The ADA provides civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations and local government services. In accordance with the Independent Contractor Agreement, all programs must be compliant with the ADA.

Q: How does The Woodlands Township handle Independent Contractor percentages?

- A. • The Township offers the following revenue rates:
• Indoor Programs (Recreation Center): 60/40 split
• Outdoor Programs: 70/30 split
• Tennis Programs: varied percentages ranging from 70/30 to 90/10 based on type of lesson (private, semi-private, group, tournaments, etc.)
• Approved Fitness Provider – monthly rate to host classes on Township property. See Township Order 020-09, as amended.
• The Independent Contractor will be paid out on the total enrollment fees collected minus the differential fee charged to non-residents.

Q: How are classes priced?

- A. All Independent Contractors set the price for their activities. The Recreation Team may provide recommendations to ensure cost recovery goals are being met.

Q: What is included in the facility set up?

- A. As stated in the Agreement: All materials, class supplies, labor, including set-up and tear-down, equipment and services required to be performed under this Agreement are to be provided by the Independent Contractor. The Woodlands Township cannot purchase supplies for Independent Contractor utilizing The Woodlands Township's tax-exempt status. The Township shall provide the facilities for use by the Independent Contractor and ensure that the facilities are in working order. If there are tables and chairs available at the facility, the Independent Contractor may use them. Set-up and break-down of the facility is the responsibility of the Independent Contractor. All Independent Contractors are required to be on-site and set up 15 minutes prior to class start time.

Q: What holidays does The Woodlands Township Recreation Center(s) observe?

- A. The Recreation Center(s) will be closed on New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The center(s) close early on Thanksgiving Day Eve and New Year's Eve. The Township parks are open on all holidays for the public to enjoy.

Post Approval

Receiving your Independent Contractor Agreement

An Independent Contractor Agreement will be signed and will remain in effect for the duration of the selected program. If the Township wishes to continue contracted services, a new Agreement will be signed annually. Please take the time to read the Agreement and sign in all required areas. Do not remove any pages; a fully executed and signed copy of the Agreement must be returned to the Township.

Checking your course enrollment

Once registration for a new session has begun, inquiries about enrollment can be made 1) contacting the assigned Township representative in charge of the program at one of the recreation centers, or 2) checking enrollment numbers online through your ActiveNet Instructor Portal. The assigned Township representative will set up Instructor Portal access with the Independent Contractor.

Meeting the Minimum

A class will be canceled if the required minimum number of registered participants has not been met within three (3) business days of the first day of class. If a class is held that does not meet the minimum number of registered participants, the Parks and Recreation Department may move the class to another room or location to meet facility demands.

How to obtain attendance sheets/rosters

Attendance sheets can be found online in the Instructor Portal through ActiveNet. All Independent Contractors will receive an ActiveNet "How To" with instructions for downloading attendance sheets and rosters, emailing classes and more.

Taking attendance

Taking attendance in classes is highly encouraged and is important for large classes where participants may show up without having prepaid. All participants must be registered. Participants should either be on the attendance sheet or have a paid receipt before being admitted to a program. A participant's outstanding balance will be reflected on the Independent Contractor's pay sheet. The Township will not pay an Independent Contractor for money not collected from a participant.

Participant Supervision

Independent Contractors are responsible for all participants during class times. Classrooms with youth participants (minors) must not be left unattended under any circumstances. In the event of an emergency, Independent Contractors may request temporary assistance from Township Recreation Center staff. Upon conclusion of the program, the Independent Contractor is required to remain with all students until they have been picked up by a parent/guardian.

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CANCELLATIONS

If for any reason any class/activity or program is cancelled, or Independent Contractor does not conduct said class/activity session, then Independent Contractor shall not be compensated for said class or session.

Cancellation of classes

If an Independent Contractor must cancel class during a session, it is the Independent Contractor's responsibility to contact all participants and notify the Township of the cancellation as soon as possible. Additionally, if an Independent Contractor is running late, and it is during business hours, Independent Contractors may call the recreation center and ask the Recreation Center Coordinator to help notify participants. However, if it is after business hours (including weekends), it is the sole responsibility of the Independent Contractor to contact all participants. As a reminder, and in accordance with the Agreement:



Classroom set up & clean up

Independent Contractors should arrive (15 minutes) early with the expectation of setting up the facility as needed for the class/program. Independent Contractors are responsible for cleaning up their rooms after use. Many rooms have multiple uses during the day and janitorial services are not always readily available after each individual program is completed. Storage of program materials and supplies at Township facilities is not permitted.

No shows

If a participant does not show up for the first class or classes following, the Independent Contractor shall give the participant a reminder call for the remaining classes. It is the participant's responsibility to remember the classes that they've signed up for, but it is good customer service to call the participants. Phone numbers and emails for registrants can be found on ActiveNet and can be printed out on the class roster.

Customer Service Standards

Independent Contractors are expected to provide excellent customer service to participants and residents. All our Independent Contractors are a valuable part of providing awesome park and recreation programs for participants to enjoy. An Independent Contractor's attitude, enthusiasm, professionalism, timeliness and organization directly affect the quality of the participant's experience. For any questions on how to handle a difficult situation or concern, please contact your assigned Township Recreation Coordinator.

Reporting and handling accidents and incidents

In case of an emergency, Independent Contractors should immediately call 911 and then contact the Township staff assigned to the program. If it is after normal business hours, please call 281-210-3900 x 9 to reach the On-Call Supervisor.

All accidents/injuries are to be immediately reported to the Township. In non-emergency situations, Township staff will coordinate transportation of any injured party(s) who require medical attention. **A complete Accident/Incident Report must be turned in to the Township within 24 hours of any accident/incident.** Accident/Incident Reports are available at each Township Recreation Center. The Township contact will provide Independent Contractors with a copy of the Accident/Incident Report. All Accident/Incident Reports must be filled out completely and thoroughly. This often will be the only written record of an accident or incident and will be the most helpful reference during future investigations or inspections.

Receiving payment

- Independent Contractors are not employees. The Agreement and federal law requires Independent Contractors to fill out a W-9 in order to receive a 1099 at the end of the year. The 1099 will be sent to the address on the Agreement.
 - Independent Contractors and the Township will each receive a percentage of program registration course revenue. Registration fees are collected and deposited by the Township and percentages are paid to Independent Contractors on a predetermined schedule, in accordance with the signed Agreement. The Independent Contractor will be paid out on the total enrollment fees collected minus the differential fee charged to non-residents
- Percentages are set as follows: [PW2]
 - Indoor Programs: (Recreation Center) 60/40 split
 - Outdoor Programs: 70/30 split
 - Tennis Programs[PW3] : varied percentages ranging from 70/30 to 90/10 based on type of lesson (private, semi-private, group, tournaments, etc.)
- Approved Fitness Provider – monthly rate to host classes on Township property (See Township Order 020-09, as amended)

Class Surveys and Monitoring.

The Township will obtain participant feedback about offered courses, instructors, facilities, and staff using participant surveys, emails, phone calls and regular monitoring of the programs. The Township strives to continually improve offered programs and participant feedback is an essential part of the process.

Termination of Agreement

In accordance with the Agreement, the Township may terminate or decide not to renew an Agreement as a result of the following, including but not limited to:

- Participant complaints
 - Insufficient enrollment
 - Facility availability
 - Compromised safety or security of participants
- Independent Contractor not performing the services of the Agreement to the satisfaction of the Township



Program Promotion

The Township's Parks and Recreation Department markets programs/classes for all Independent Contractors in various ways and is always open to brainstorming new opportunities. However, Independent Contractors are encouraged to market classes/programs on their own to ensure successful enrollment numbers. The more the program/class is marketed, the better the opportunity for Independent Contractors to increase their earning potential.

Typical Promotion by The Woodlands Township

- The Township will place a description of your program or service in the seasonal Action Guide and in ActiveNet, the registration site. The Action Guide is available in PDF form on the Township website (www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/actionguide).
- The Township sends email blasts to active members in our database. The Township reviews and evaluates current programs to determine the content of the e-blasts, as well as which programs are included in the e-blasts based on date, attendance, and e-blast theme.
- The Township also has the ability to promote programs through various forms of social media, which includes the Parks and Recreation Department Facebook.
- The Township also promotes upcoming programs and events on both digital marquees located at Bear Branch and Rob Fleming Recreation Centers.

